

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA
DEPARTMENT OF INTERIEOR
BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT
MEDFORD DISTRICT OFFICE

CATEGORICAL EXCLUSION/DECISION RECORD
Grants Pass Resource Area Hazard Tree Removal – FY 2009
DOI-BLM-OR-M070-2009-0002-CX

A. Proposed Action

The BLM is proposing removal of individual trees or small groups of trees which are dead, diseased, injured, or which constitute a safety hazard. Trees may be left on site, sold, or provided as in-kind contributions to watershed committees or Soil and Water Conservation Committees for riparian or instream enhancement projects.

B. Location/Land Use Allocation: Matrix and Reserve land allocations in the Grants Pass Resource Area.

C. Need / Rationale for the Proposed Action:

Snags and leaning green trees often pose a hazard to the public along roads, trails and along private property bordering BLM lands. The Medford District Resource Management Plan requires BLM to provide for the safety of forest users including removal of hazard trees. Hazard trees need to be removed from recreation sites, along utility Right-of-Ways, roads, trails campgrounds, administrative sites and other developed areas, as well as along private property bordering BLM lands (RMP pp. 34, 68, 72, 83). The BLM often needs to respond rapidly to negate this hazard, particularly along private property to assure safety to homeowners when a hazard is recognized.

D. Description of the Proposed Action:

Hazard trees will be identified utilizing the Field Guide for Danger Tree Identification and Response (USDA, 2005: R6-NR-FP-PR-03-05), as well as professional judgment.

Down wood will be left on site as coarse woody debris to meet or exceed RMP standards. A minimum of six logs per acre would be retained in riparian reserves. The largest logs would be retained as coarse woody material to meet these guidelines.

Trees could be felled and sold as Special Forest Products, or provided to Watershed or Soil and Water Conservation Committees for riparian and instream habitat enhancement projects.

Where appropriate, whole tree yarding would be allowed if trees are slated for use in riparian or instream projects.

Access for removal would require no more than maintenance to existing roads. If roads need to be maintained, vehicles would be washed before entering BLM lands to reduce the spread of

noxious weeds. In known POC root disease infection areas, vehicles and equipment would be washed after completing work.

Trees would be felled away from any known cultural or plant sites.

Where trees would be yarded for sale, a Grants Pass Resource Area botanist would be consulted prior to removal for appropriate project design features to reduce the risk of spread of noxious weeds.

Historic telephone line/insulator cultural sites are recorded in the Grants Pass Resource Area. If any artifacts are sighted in the area, prior to any hazard tree removal, a Grants Pass Resource Area Archaeologist would be consulted to verify the tree/trees slated for removal are not part of one of these sites.

In small group removals, Best Management Practices (FEIS (2008), Appendix I at 268-318) would be adhered to.

E. Plan Conformance

The proposed action is in conformance with the following plans:

1. Final EIS for the Revision of the Resource Management Plans of the Western Oregon Bureau of Land Management (2008)
2. Record of Decision for the Medford District Resource Management Plan (RMP) (2008)
3. Medford District Noxious Weed Environmental Assessment (1998).
4. ROD for Management of Port-Orford Cedar in Southwest Oregon (2004)

F. Compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act

The proposed action is categorically excluded from further NEPA documentation under Code of Federal Regulations (43 CFR 46.210 (f)) : *Routine and continuing government business, including such things as supervision, administration, operation, maintenance and replacement activities having limited context and intensity; e.g. limited size and magnitude or short term effects.*

The Proposed Action also qualifies as a categorical exclusion under Department Manual 516 DM 11.9 – **C. Forestry** (2) *Sale and removal of individual trees or small groups of trees which are dead, diseased, injured, or which constitute a safety hazard, and where access for the removal requires no more than maintenance to existing roads.*

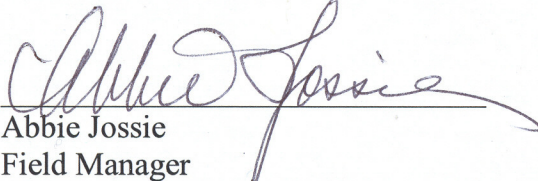
The proposed action has been reviewed to determine if extraordinary circumstances exist that would require further environmental analysis and documentation (516 DM 2, Appendix 2). None have been identified (see attached).

 1/5/2009
NEPA Reviewer / Date

 1/5/2009
Preparer / Date

G. Decision

I have reviewed this CE, plan conformance and NEPA compliance review and have determined the proposed project is in conformance with the approved land use plan and that no further environmental analysis is required. It is my decision to implement the project as described.


Abbie Jossie
Field Manager
Grants Pass Resources Area

1-6-09
Date

**NEPA COMPLIANCE
CATEGORICAL EXCLUSION REVIEW
Grants Pass Resource Area Hazard Tree Removal – FY 2009
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The Code of Federal Regulations (43 CFR 46.205(c)) requires the review of the following “extraordinary circumstances” (46 CFR 46.215) to determine if an otherwise categorically excluded action would require additional analysis and environmental documentation.

1) Have significant impacts on public health or safety.

()Yes (**X**)**No** Remarks: This project is intended to enhance public safety by removing hazards before they endanger the public.

2) Have significant impacts on such natural resources and unique geographic characteristics as historic or cultural resources; park, recreation or refuge lands; wilderness areas; wild or scenic rivers; national natural landmarks; sole or principal drinking water aquifers; prime farmlands; wetlands (Executive Order 11990); floodplains (Executive Order 11988); national monuments; migratory birds; and other ecologically significant or critical areas.

()Yes (**X**)**No** Remarks: While activities may occur in some of these areas (parks, recreation sites, etc), the small scale of felling would not result in significant impacts.

3) Have highly controversial environmental effects or involve unresolved conflicts concerning alternative uses of available resources [NEPA Section 102(2)(E)].

()Yes (**X**)**No** Remarks: Effects of single tree or small group tree felling would not have controversial effects.

4) Have highly uncertain and potentially significant environmental effects or involve unique or unknown environmental risks.

()Yes (**X**)**No** Remarks: None have been identified.

5) Establish a precedent for future action or represent a decision in principle about future actions with potentially significant environmental effects.

()Yes (**X**)**No** Remarks: This proposal does not set a precedent for future actions.

6) Have a direct relationship to other actions with individually insignificant but cumulatively significant environmental effects.

()Yes (**X**)**No** Remarks: None have been identified.

7) Have significant impacts on properties listed, or eligible for listing, on the National Register of Historic Places as determined by either the bureau or office.

☐Yes ☒No Remarks: If cultural sites are in the area, trees would be felled away from the site to prevent impacts.

8) Have significant impacts on species listed, or proposed to be listed, on the List of Endangered or Threatened Species, or have significant impacts on designated Critical Habitat for these species.

☐Yes ☒No No such effects are expected.

9) Violate a Federal law, or a State, local, or tribal law or requirement imposed for the protection of the environment.

☐Yes ☒No The project would not violate any Federal, State, local or tribal law or other requirement for protection of the environment.

10) Have a disproportionately high and adverse effect on low income or minority populations (Executive Order 12898).

☐Yes ☒No No effects are expected.

11) Limit access to and ceremonial use of Indian sacred sites on Federal lands by Indian religious practitioners or significantly adversely affect the physical integrity of such sacred sites (Executive Order 13007).

☐Yes ☒No No access would be limited.

12) Contribute to the introduction, continued existence, or spread of noxious weeds or non-native invasive species known to occur in the area or actions that may promote the introduction, growth, or expansion of the range of such species (Federal Noxious Weed Control Act and Executive Order 13112).

☐Yes ☒No

Reviewers:

Concepcion 12/19/08
Silviculture, Vegetation Dynamics
& Port-Orford Cedar Date

James A. Ry 12/23/08
Special Forest Products Date
& Hazard Tree Assessment

Ann Fato 12/22/08
Botany Date

Alia Brenner 12/19/08
Cultural Resources Date

Shirley J. Jey 12/22/08
Fisheries Date

John Reel 11/4/08
Wildlife Date

Michael D. Blum 11/4/08
Soils/Hydrology Date

acting Joan Rogers 12/22/08
Visual Resources / Recreation Date

Joan Rogers 12/22/08
Engineering Date

John W. L... 1/5/09
Fire and Fuels Date